
A large colony of King penguins is gathered on a rocky shore. The penguins are standing close together, with their distinctive black and white plumage and bright orange-yellow chests clearly visible. The background is filled with more penguins, creating a sense of a vast colony. The foreground shows the dark, wet rocks of the shore.

 BOOKS FOR YOUNG EXPLORERS
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Amazing Animal Groups

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A family of gorillas lives in a mountain forest in Africa.

by Suzanne Venino



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African elephants crowd together in a circle to guard their young from danger. Suddenly, a huge female elephant charges! She defends the group by frightening away enemies. Elephants live in groups called herds. Living in groups helps animals in different ways.







A herd of elephants gathers at a water hole. The elephants suck water into their trunks and squirt it into their mouths. Nearby, two young elephants help each other take a mud bath. Mud protects their tender skin from the hot sun and from insects. The herd may travel many miles to the next water hole.





In Africa, gorillas rest together in a forest. The adult members of the group watch over the young ones as they play. Gorillas may look fierce, but they are really gentle and shy. They spend most of their time looking for food or resting.



While the adults rest,
the young gorillas
chew on twigs
and branches.





In a tree, a mother gorilla
and her baby build a nest
where they can take a nap.
The young gorilla learns
by watching its mother.
Another baby plays
on the ground.
If it is hurt or scared,
it runs to its mother.
An older gorilla
beats his chest as if to say
to the others, "Look at me.
I'm big and strong!"





Zebras live in large herds on the hot, flat plains of Africa. They usually stay near a river or a water hole. Living together helps these striped animals protect themselves. While some members of the herd take a drink, others keep a sharp lookout for lions or other enemies.



Something has frightened these zebras.
Perhaps they heard a noise or smelled a lion.
The zebras scramble out of the water.
The herd then gallops away to escape danger.





Ants live in very large groups called colonies. Every member of a colony has a job to do.



Ants called leaf-cutters take bits of leaves back to their nest. Hundreds of army ants march over fallen branches. Some of them join together to make a bridge. Others carry young ants to a new nest. The young are white and do not yet look like adults. By stroking tiny insects called aphids, a big black ant gathers sweet juice from them. The ant will share the juice with its colony.

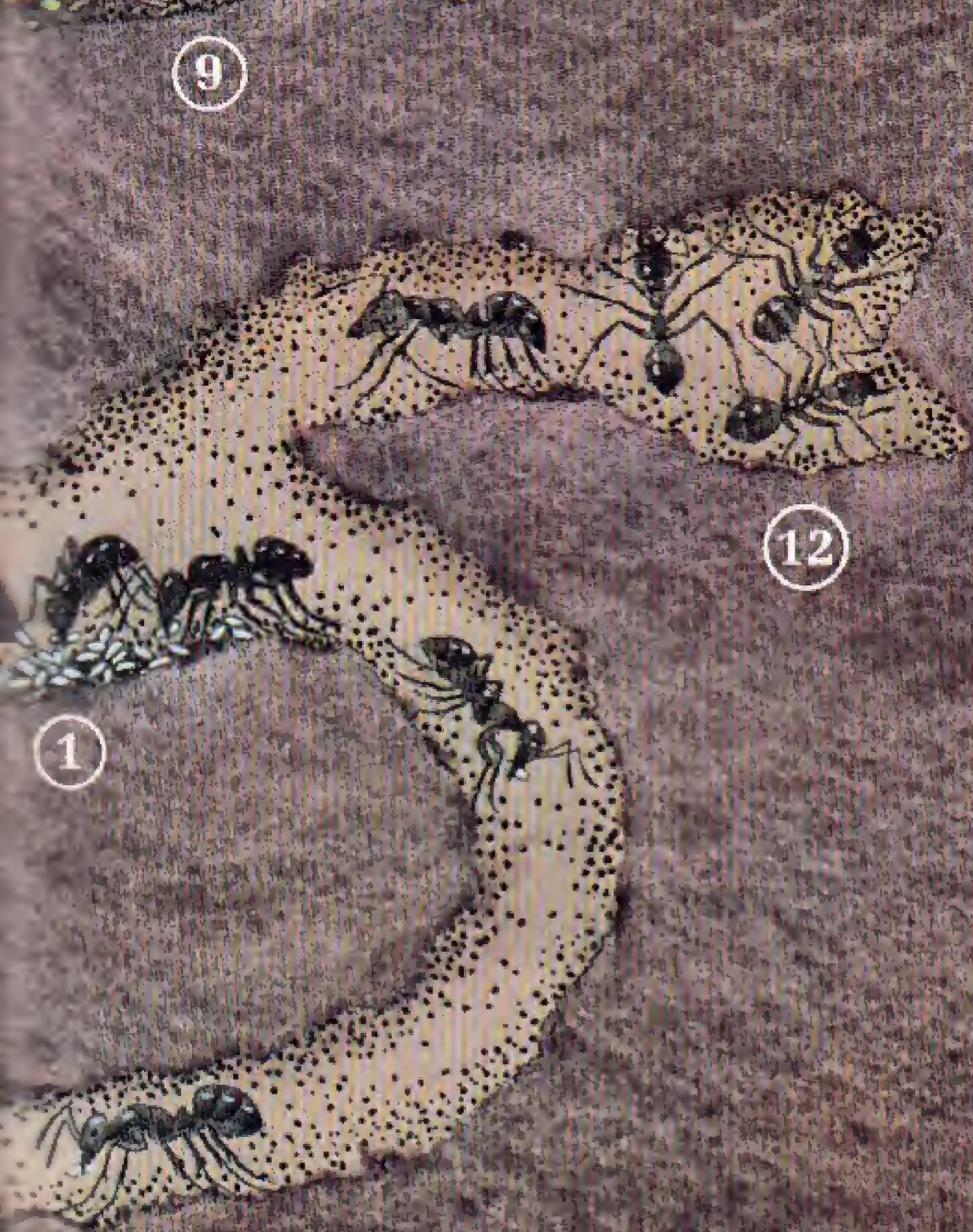






This painting shows the nest of some black ants. It is underground. Match the numbers on the painting with the numbers below to find out what the ants are doing.

1. The queen ant lays many eggs.
2. Worker ants lick the eggs clean.
3. Workers feed young ants, called larvae. The larvae will change into pupae.
4. Workers care for pupae, which will change into adult ants.
5. Red ants attack the black ants.
6. Red ants carry off the young of black ants to keep as slaves.
7. Ants bring a dead grasshopper into the nest for food.
8. Ants get juice from aphids.
9. Food is stored in a special room.
10. Two ants feed each other.
11. A beetle comes into the nest.
12. Workers dig a new tunnel.





Penguins squeal and squawk as they greet one another. These large birds have wings but do not fly. They use their wings as flippers to swim in the ocean near the South Pole. A parade of penguins heads down to the ocean to fish for food. The birds look like big wind-up toys as they waddle across the snow. Swoosh! A penguin dives into the icy cold water for a swim.

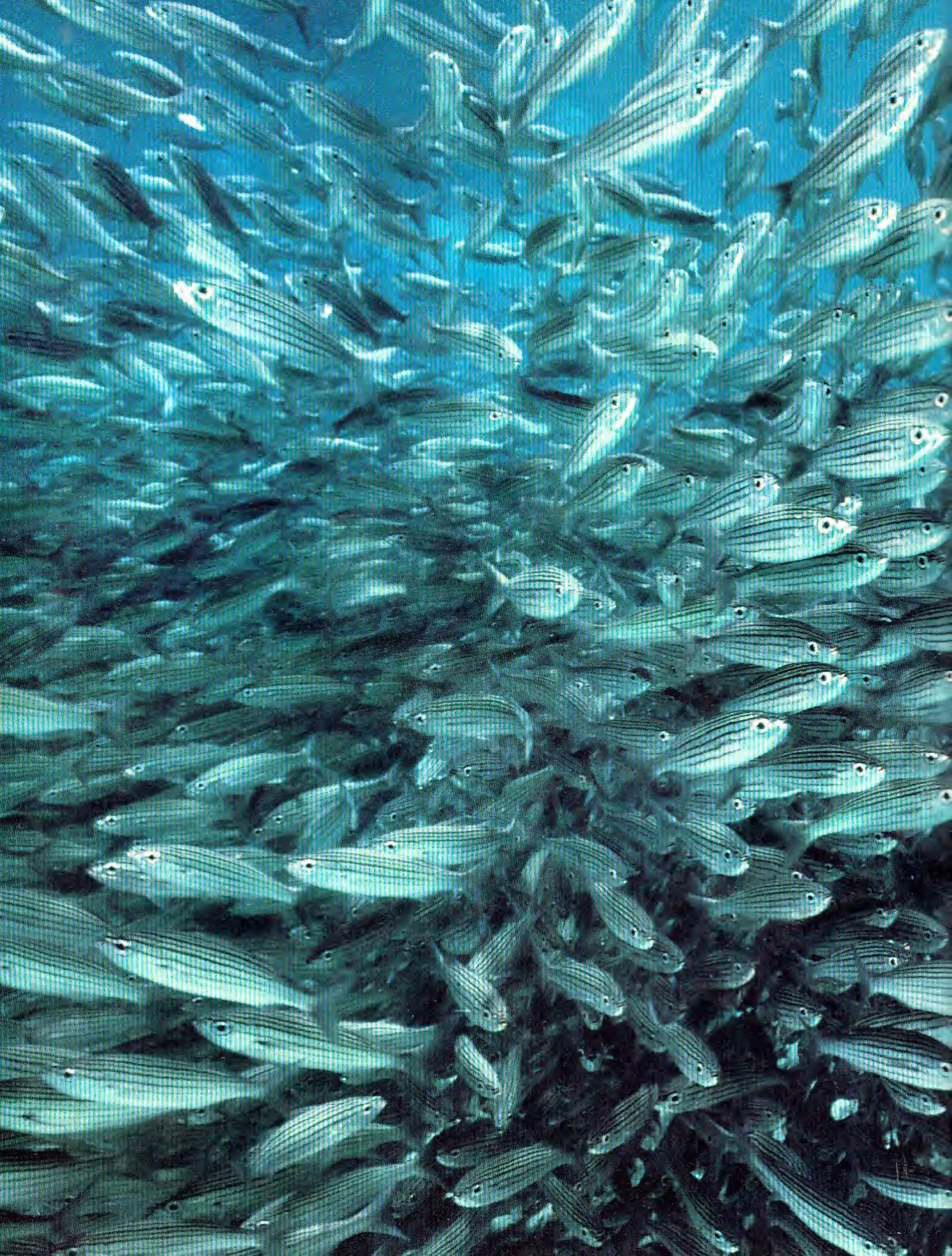


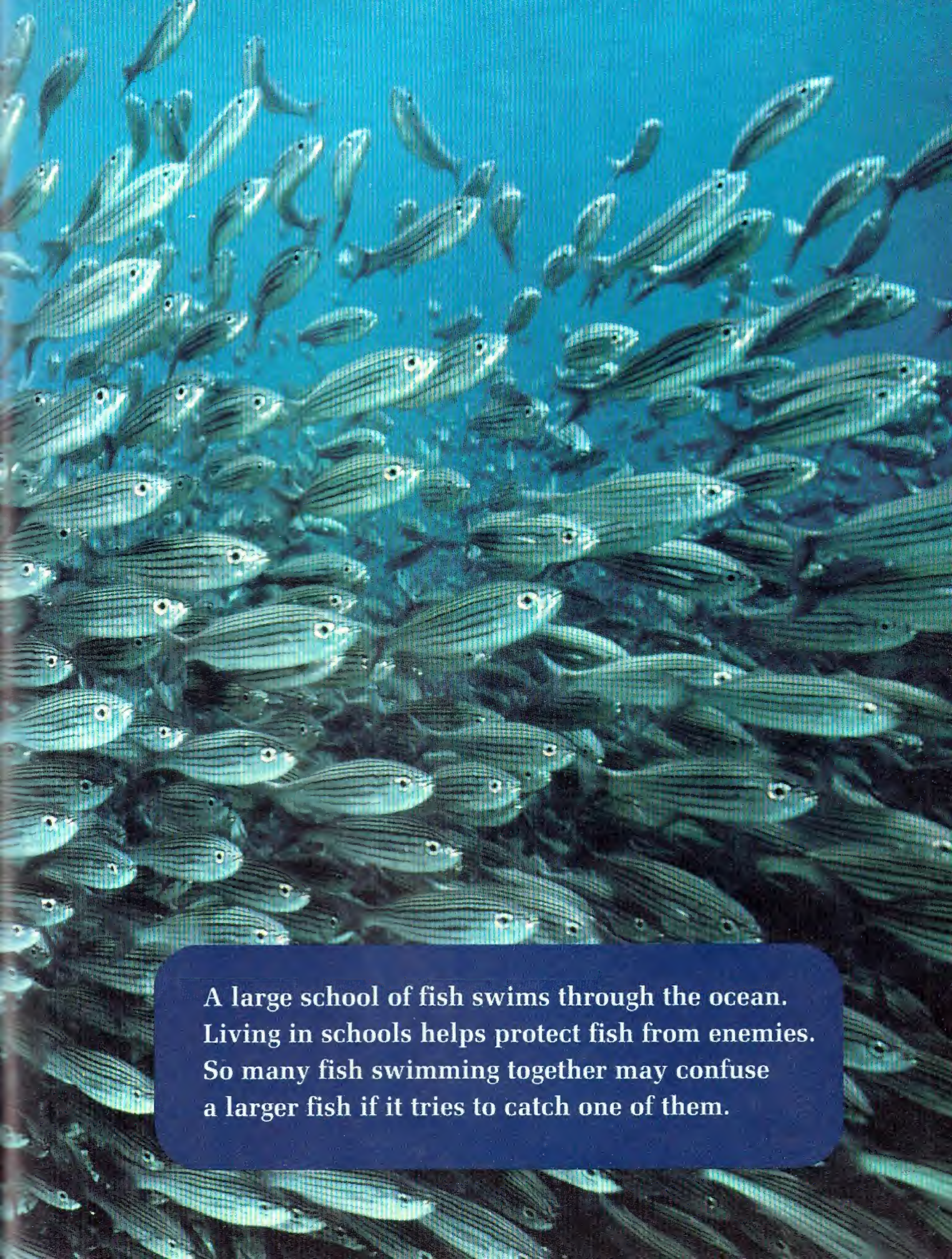
Most of the time penguins live in small groups in the sea. Once a year they gather in huge numbers on land to mate and to have their young. Two penguins warn another one to keep away from their nest. The female penguin lays an egg in a nest of stones.



When the chick hatches from the egg, both parents help feed it and care for it. Penguin chicks grow quickly. In about six months, they start to shed their fluffy brown feathers and grow black and white ones.







A large school of fish swims through the ocean. Living in schools helps protect fish from enemies. So many fish swimming together may confuse a larger fish if it tries to catch one of them.



White pelicans leave their nests to find food. Working together, these big birds flap their wings on the water to stir up fish. Then the pelicans open their bills and scoop the fish from the sea.



A hungry young pelican gets fish
by poking its head into the pouch
below its mother's bill.



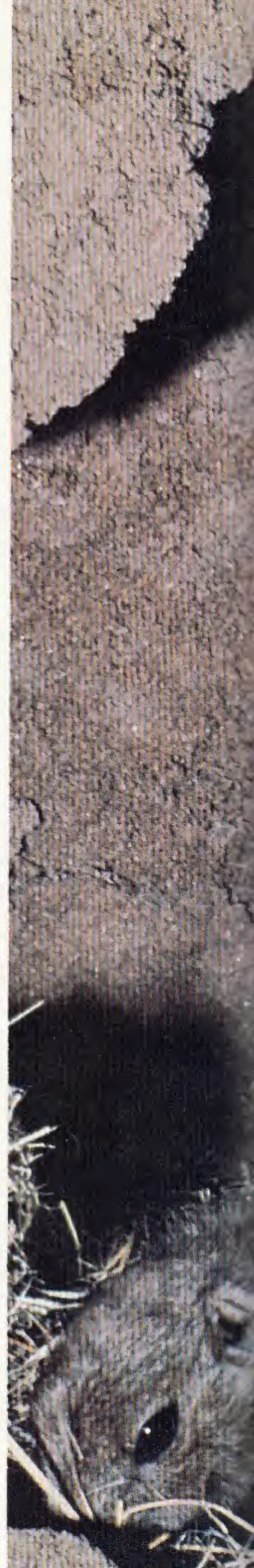
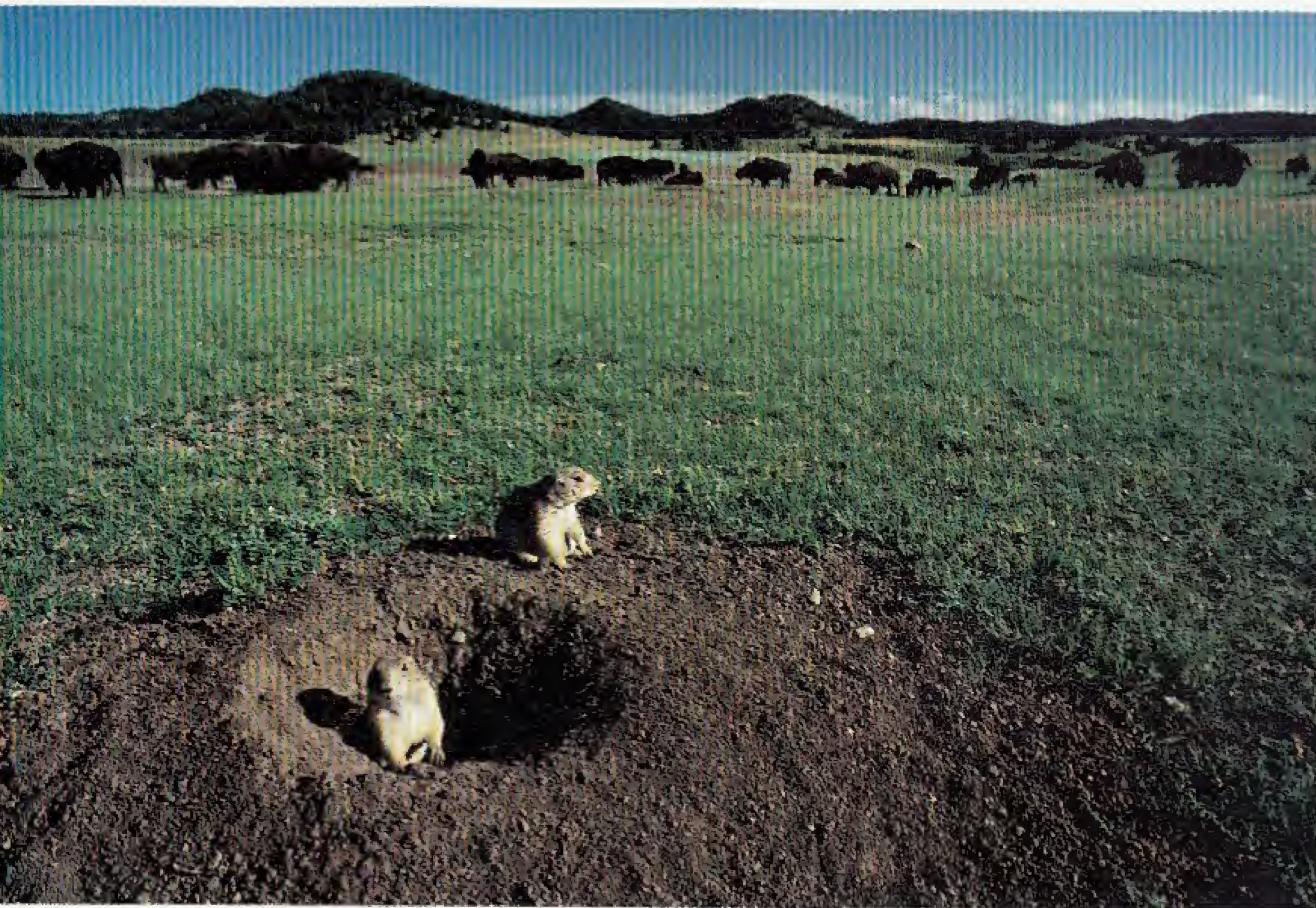


A family of prairie dogs sits in the warm sunshine. Standing up, one nibbles a weed. Other prairie dogs tumble and play. These small, furry animals live in large groups called towns. They dig holes and tunnels to build underground homes, or burrows.





Prairie dogs climb out of their burrow.
They look and listen for signs of danger.
The bison will not bother them.
But if a prairie dog spots an enemy,
it barks a warning to the others,
and they all scamper back underground.







Ow-ooo! A wolf calls to other wolves with a long howl. Wolves live together in groups called packs. When hunting for food, a pack follows its leader, an older and stronger wolf.



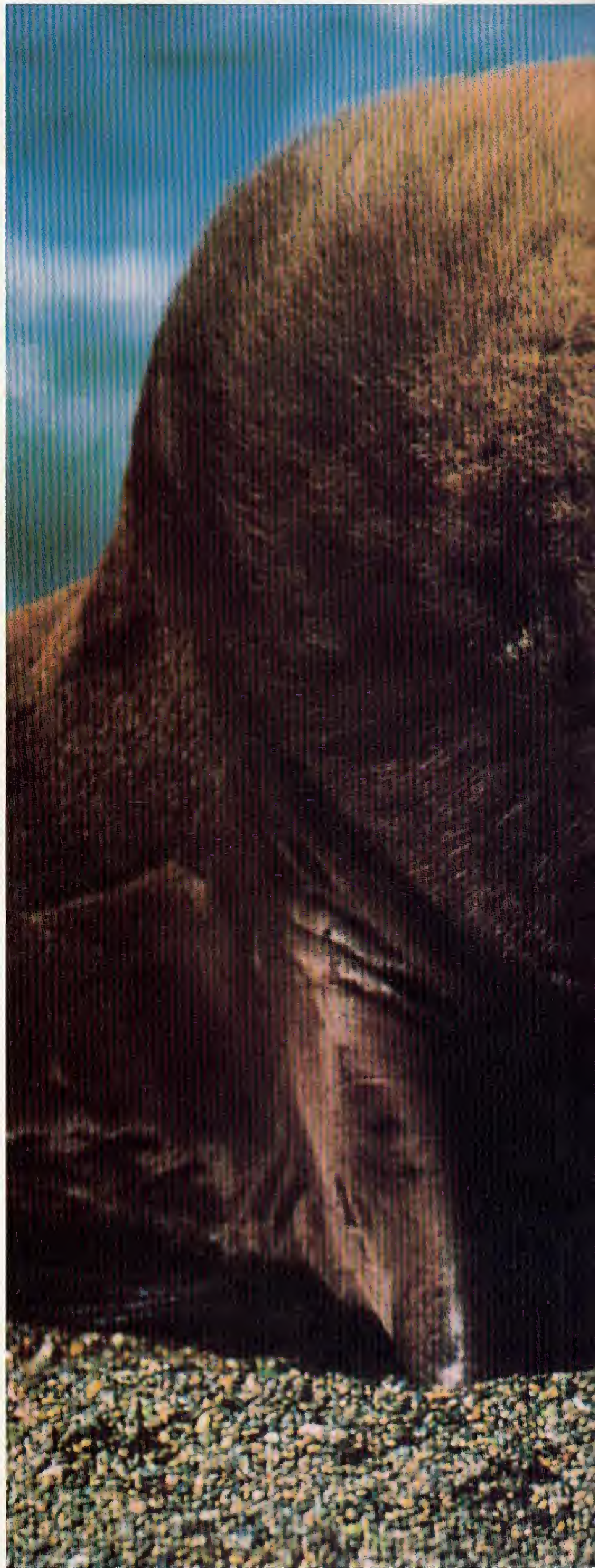
A member of a pack licks the lead wolf in the mouth when they meet. This is one way that wolves show respect for their leaders.



Thick fur keeps a wolf warm as it rests in the cold winter snow.



A huge male sea lion nuzzles his mate. Their young pup wants some attention, too. Once a year sea lions gather on land in large groups to mate and to have their young. Many other kinds of animals live together all the time. As you have seen, animals live in groups for different reasons. Can you name some of them?





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Walrus splash in the sea. Long teeth, called tusks, grow from their mouths. These animals live in big herds near the North Pole.

Cover: King penguins gather at a nesting place called a rookery.

